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# State of the Nations

## McCone: Pros and Cons

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The President's nomination of John A. McCone to head the Central Intelligence Agency is one of those moves which display the difficulty of finding the right man—acceptable to all—for a sensitive and sophisticated post.

Many of the senators and representatives with whom Mr. McCone worked as chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission have high regard for this tough-minded engineer and shipowner, believe he will prove an effective, no-waste-motions administrator, and assume that his inflexible opposition to the Soviet Union and all its works will make for a vigilant intelligence organization.

Oppositely, some of the physicists and scientists who have worked with the AEC and the government are deeply disappointed with the McCone selection, question whether a man of his intense and preset viewpoint can direct successfully an enterprise which must skillfully note every change of breeze and turn of tide, and wonder why Mr. Kennedy selected him.

As for the White House, Mr. McCone is praised for his patriotism and willingness to enter again upon a massive government assignment. And to the critics the rather plaintive point is made that it is very difficult to find many takers for these tough tasks.

Certainly as AEC chairman Mr. McCone did a superb job of winning over the congressional Joint Commit-

tee on Atomic Energy, which had been alienated by the unwillingness of Lewis W. Strauss, former AEC chairman, to share nuclear secrets with it. Mr. McCone shared secrets. He treated the legislators with great respect. They recommended his appointment to President Kennedy. Some of the people who usually funnel appointment suggestions to the President were taken by surprise on this selection.

Mr. McCone will quite likely do an effective job of pruning and pummeling the rather unwieldy, sprawling CIA into leaner shape. Organizationally he should be able to improve its functioning. He may be a better administrator than was Allen W. Dulles, who on the other hand had extensive experience as a "master spy" himself.

What then is the basis for the sharp though largely unpublishized criticism of the McCone nomination?

For one thing, there are those who look at key Washington positions and find that besides a Roman Catholic President, the Senate leader is of the same faith, as is the prospective House Speaker, John W. McCormack of Massachusetts. Now the command post of an organization with world contacts as extensive as the State Department's is being filled by a prominent Roman Catholic layman. It is suggested that this will only stir Protestant concern, whereas so far the "religious issue" has been largely muted during the Kennedy term of office.

Beyond this, the scientists and intellectuals are apprehensive over what they see

as the inflexibility of Mr. McCone on some key issues. During the Eisenhower and Kennedy regimes, when it was Washington's declared policy to seek an agreement with Moscow for a nuclear test ban, Mr. McCone argued repeatedly for resumption of nuclear testing, in and out of the AEC. While the present AEC chairman, Glenn T. Seaborg, was saying there was no proof that the Soviets had resumed testing, Mr. McCone expressed his opinion that the Soviets were secretly testing.

Last July he said the test moratorium was a "greater disadvantage" to the United States than to the Soviets—though it proved to be the Soviets who first resumed testing.

It has been said that the head of the CIA must be an expert at administration, an imaginative scholar, an individual who understands the revolutionary upheavals that are sweeping the globe. His job basically is to collect and sift the "intelligence" which flows in from all this churning world so that the President and the National Security Council and all the key policy makers of Washington may have the most sensitive, most correct data on which to base their actions.

By selecting a no-nonsense, militantly anti-Soviet Republican, President Kennedy may have hoped to disarm critics of his foreign policies. He has made his nomination, and Congress is likely to go along with it. A very crucial appointment.